

# SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Jenny Rudin,  
*Assistant Concertmaster*  
Beverly Ponzio  
*Principal Second*  
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Kay Barraclough  
Elizabeth Breed  
Carl Danstrom  
Anthony Dehony  
Gloria Sue Graham  
Edyth Hamlin  
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Patricia Healy  
Jean Kennedy  
Gilda Mazzanti  
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Susan D. Young

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*Principal*  
Ralph Anderson  
Arthur Bauch  
Hope Elizabeth Bauch  
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La Donna Edwards  
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Isla Parmeter  
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*Principal*  
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Robert Neff  
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67-68  
Season

San Jose

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216  
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## SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SANDOR SALGO, CONDUCTOR

FIRST CONCERT — SEASON 1967-68

Tuesday, November 7, 1967, at 8:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium

Guest Artist

MILDRED MILLER, Soprano



### PROGRAM

OVERTURE TO "EGMONT".....*Beethoven*

ARIAS FROM "THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO".....*Mozart*

Voi Che Sapeta  
Non so piu cosa son

ARIA: "Chi'io mi scordi di te".....*Mozart*

Miss Miller  
William Erlendson, Sr., *Accompanist*

BOTTICELLIAN TRYPTICH.....*Respighi*

Primavera  
L'Adorazione dei Magi  
La Nascita di Venere

### INTERMISSION

"ADIEU, FORETS" from *Jeanne d'Arc*.....*Tchaikovsky*

"NON PIU MESTA" from *La Cenerentola*.....*Rossini*

Miss Miller

EXCERPTS FROM "THE MASTERSINGERS".....*Wagner*

Introduction to Act III  
Dance of the Apprentices  
Procession of the Mastersingers

## PROGRAM NOTES

By MARILYN TUCKER

OVERTURE TO "EGMONT".....*Ludwig van Beethoven*  
(1770-1827)

Writing incidental music for an 1810 revival of Goethe's drama *Egmont* by the Burg-theater in Vienna was a kind of labor of love for Beethoven. Not only was there his veneration for the German Dramatist, but similar to his once-felt attraction to Napoleon, he was completely taken with the character of Goethe's hero, Charles, Count of Egmont.

The action in the play takes place in the Netherlands of the 16th century, where Count Egmont leads a revolt against the Spaniards during the wars of annexation. The themes of the play are great philosophical causes of Beethoven: denunciation of tyranny and espousal of liberty and democratic ideals. Beethoven's identification with this self-reliant champion of independence constantly struggling against fate was so complete that he refused payment for the incidental music.

In the complete incidental music for *Egmont*, the Overture is followed by nine instrumental and vocal numbers. By itself, the overture has become standard in concert halls; this is not without justification, for it contains the finest music in the work.

ARIAS FROM "THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO".....*Wolfgang A. Mozart*  
(1756-1791)  
"Voi che sapeta"  
"Non so piu cosa son"

*The Marriage of Figaro* is 181 years old, the oldest opera in standard repertory. Its amazing success was predicted by its first cast and orchestra, who loudly cheered the composer during rehearsals with "Bravo, Maestro, Viva, viva grande Mozart." The libretto was adapted from French playwright Beaumarchais' comic trilogy (from whence came Rossini's later "Barber of Seville"). So vigorous were the Frenchmen's attacks on the aristocracy that Napoleon, on seeing the plays, called them "the revolution already in action."

Both of these arias are sung by Cherubino, a soprano "trousers" part. Cherubino, scarcely more than a boy, is already caught up in precocious passion for women. "Non so piu cosa son", charming, exquisite music, is sung in the company of Susannah. It is Cherubino's latest canzonetta for Susannah, for the Countess, for Barbarina, in fact, all women. In this aria are heard all the amorous flutterings of youth—emotions that cannot be understood and desires that cannot be expressed.

"Voi che sapeta" is from Act II and comes about when Cherubino enters the Countess' bedroom and sings his new canzonetta for her. The subject is the one most familiar to Cherubino—love. The message is directed in somewhat oblique fashion to the Countess, who has tender feelings for the page.

CONCERT ARIA "Ch'io mi scordi di te".....*Wolfgang A. Mozart*  
(1756-1791)

The Koche catalogue of Mozart works lists some 75 concert arias written in the operatic manner for single voice or groups. These were written by the composer from the age of nine to the last year of his life.

Singers were always demanding arias, preferably new ones, for their concert programs, and guided by self-interest and generosity, Mozart was happy to comply. Coloratura arias

were in the greatest demand, and although Mozart disgustingly referred to them as "chopped-up noodles," he was usually amenable to singers' wishes. "I like an aria to fit a singer as perfectly as a well-made set of clothes," he wrote his father.

Mozart also supplied new arias for his own operas when different singers joined the cast and wrote supplementary arias for performances of operas by other composers as well. (It was the singer and the boxoffice, not the composer, that counted.) These supplementary arias have been called the "triumph of the singer" and the "enemy of the dramatic development."

K.505 takes its text from the second act of the composer's "*Idomeneo*" and was composed in December 1786 "for Mademoiselle Storace and myself" as Mozart noted on the manuscript. Some months earlier Mozart had used the same text for a new aria when "*Idomeneo*" was revived in Vienna. In this earlier revision, the aria was sung by the opera's Idamante, a role originally written for castrato tenor. The aria describes the tragedy of a deserted lover bidding farewell to a faithless sweetheart.

The "Mademoiselle Storace" referred to in the dedication of K. 505 was Anna Selin "Nancy" Storace, a soprano born in London in 1761 to an Irish mother and an Italian father who was a double bass player at Drury Lane. In 1783 Nancy Storace became a member of the Italian Opera in Vienna where she was the first Susannah in "*The Marriage of Figaro*". She and her brother, Stephen, a composition pupil of Mozart's, were held in high esteem by the composer. When they decided to return to London permanently, Mozart wrote this scena as a farewell. Nancy Storace was a singer of no exceeding brilliance or virtuosity, but her voice was praised for its great warmth and tenderness. The piano part in the aria was included as a special souvenir of Mozart's musical taste and depth of keyboard artistry.

In commenting on the aria, Alfred Einstein observes: "Few works of art combine such personal expression with such mastery, the intimacy of a letter with the highest grandeur of form."

# BOTTICELLIAN TRYPTICH.....Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

Respighi's mastery of coloristic orchestration was decidedly influenced by his association with Rimsky-Korsakoff. He studied composition with the Russian composer after going to St. Petersburg in 1900 to play first violin with the Imperial Opera. Thereafter he was a concert violinist for five years, for a time he played viola in a string quartet, he taught, he conducted and he composed.

In composition, Respighi was prolific. Operas, ballets, choral and orchestral works, chamber music, violin and piano pieces flowed from his pen. His works are a synthesis of songful melodies and full, rich harmonies. His orchestral works are masterful evocations of the Italian scene.

Respighi is remembered chiefly for a number of symphonic poems that symbolize the ageless beauties of Rome—"Fountains," "Pines," "Birds" and "Festivals."

He was also greatly interested in the historic treasures of Italian painters, from whence came the inspiration for the "Botticellian Triptych." Scored for small orchestra, the work was written in 1927 on commission of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Its three sections recall in glowing musical terms the ageless beauties of Botticelli; (1) Primavera; (2) L'Adorazione dei Magi; and (3) La nascita di Venere.

# "ADIEU, FORETS" from *Jeanne d'Arc*.....Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

In the fall of 1878, Tchaikovsky resigned his position at the Moscow Conservatoire to bathe himself in the literature of the French national heroine. Providing his own libretto from an adaptation of the Schiller play, *Jeanne d'Arc* was completed during the winter of 1879-80.

"The idea of the Maid of Orleans has taken furious possession of me," he wrote. "I want to finish the whole work in an hour as sometimes happens in a dream." And that is literally what he almost did. Two thirds of the opera was thrown together in two weeks. Its premiere in 1880 with the St. Petersburg Opera was far from being a success. Notwithstanding some marvelously beautiful passages, including this aria of Joan's, the opera lacks coherence, with many scenes from the French setting appearing to be incongruously Russian.

The opera has never been in standard repertoire and except for arias like "Adieu, forets," it is all but forgotten.

# "NON PIU MESTA" from *La Cenerentola*.....Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868)

Facility was a necessary ingredient for operatic composers of early nineteenth century Italy. And Rossini was probably the most facile of all those seeking to survive in that unstable operatic climate. "Give me a laundry list and I will set it to music," is the oft-quoted statement of amusing self-belittlement. In a period of nineteen years he wrote nearly forty operas—works sparkling with melody, grace, pathos and hilarity. In his greater moments he was capable of writing such unblemished masterpieces as "*The Barber of Seville*."

*La Cenerentola*, first produced in 1817, is Rossini's adaptation of Perrault's cinderella fairy tale. Its first performance in Rome met with a hostile reception, but very shortly it rivaled the composer's *Barber* in popularity. Eventually it sank into near total obscurity, only recently having shown signs of returning to favor.

The aria "Non piu Mesta" is the opera's finale, a florid rondo in which Cinderella resolves all plot conflicts—forgiving those who have wronged her and looking forward to living happily ever after with her prince.

# THREE EXCERPTS FROM THE MASTERSINGERS.....Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

Wagner designed *The Mastersingers* as a practicable little opera within the scope of any European theater. Gone are the giants, dragons, evil dwarfs and Valkyries of the *Ring*. Here the hero is "folk" as typified in the role of Hans Sachs, cobbler-philosopher and mastersinger of the sixteenth century.

The opera was conceived in the summer of 1845 soon after *Tannhaeuser* had been completed. The evolution from tragedy to comedy has been likened to the foolish satyr plays that followed the tragedies in the Athenian theater. The preliminary libretto was completed in 1845, revised libretto in the winter of 1861 and the music in 1867. The first performance was conducted at Munich in June 1868 with Hans von Bülow conducting.

Wagner's source material was a number of books of the medieval guilds in which their art was shown to be produced by strict rule and discipline. The opera is a serious work, but a very human comedy. It is Wagner's most popular opera.

What we hear tonight is the customary orchestral suite for concert stage: The Prelude to Act III, intended as a musical portrait of Hans Sachs; the Dance of the Apprentices on contest day; and the Procession of the Mastersingers.

## SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SANDOR SALGO, *Conductor*

SECOND CONCERT — SEASON 1967-68

Tuesday, January 9, 1968 at 8:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium



*Guest Artist*

TOSSY SPIVAKOVSKY, Violinist

### PROGRAM

SYMPHONY NO. 9, IN C MAJOR, D. 944.....*Schubert*

Andante: allegro ma non Troppo

Andante: mato

Selierz (allegro vivace)

Allegro vivace

### INTERMISSION

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN IN D MAJOR.....*Beethoven*

Allegro, ma non troppo

Larghetto

Rondo

Mr. Spivakovsky

### PROGRAM NOTES

By MARILYN TUCKER

SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN C MAJOR ("GREAT"), D. 944.....*Franz Schubert*  
(1797-1828)

Schubert's "Great" Symphony was the composer's last, ninth in order of composition, seventh in publication.

Completed in March 1828, the symphony has a sweep and grandeur that belies the composer's awful conditions of abject poverty and recurring pain that attended its birth. The work was not performed until after Schubert's death, though he is thought to have been present at a rehearsal of the Vienna Musikverein, the organization which had requested it. The men had difficulties with it, however, and at Schubert's request, the symphony was withdrawn from its planned premiere and an earlier C Major symphony of 1817 was substituted.

Conflicting opinions exist over whether the C Major Symphony performed by the Viennese Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in the Redoutensaal one month after Schubert's death and repeated the following March was the earlier or later one. In any event, the man to whom history owes a debt of gratitude for resurrecting the "Great" is Robert Schumann, who discovered it amidst a number of Schubert's scores gathering dust in the home of Franz's brother Ferdinand. Mendelssohn was persuaded to conduct its "premiere" at the Leipzig Gewandhaus March 21, 1839. For Ferdinand, the poverty-stricken father of eight children, Schumann was able to extract from Breitkopf and Hartel a handsome price for the musty manuscripts.

Schumann was a sentimental man. He attached great significance to a steel pen he once found near the grave site of Beethoven. With this same pen he wrote his own B Flat Major Symphony as well as a glowing and still famous review of the Schubert "Great" Symphony.

"Here we have," Schumann wrote, "besides masterly power over the musical technicalities of composition, life in all its phases, color in exquisite gradations, the minutest accuracy and fitness of expression and, permeating the whole work, a spirit of romance such as we recognize in other works of Franz Schubert. And this heavenly, long drawn out symphony is like some thick romance . . . in four volumes . . . How refreshing this feeling of satisfaction of being deceived by the large wealth of melody, whereas with other composers one always fears the end, and feels often saddened by the feeble conclusion! . . ."

For Mendelssohn, the symphony was "bright, fascinating and original throughout . . . it stands at quite the head of his instrumental works."

When Schubert died, his stock of worldly possessions brought a lowly 53 gulden at auction. Many years later, a single letter of the composer's was sold for 1450 gold marks. With the inflation that goes with fame, how much then is a masterwork like the Symphony No. 9 worth?

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN IN D MAJOR, OP. 61.....*Ludwig van Beethoven*  
(1770-1827)

It is doubtful that any composer introducing a major work in this day and age would ever have to share the humiliation that must have been Beethoven's at the first performance of his Violin Concerto.

Composed especially for the noted violinist, Franz Clement, for performance December 23, 1806, in the Theater an der Wien in Vienna, the concerto apparently was finished too late for a complete rehearsal. Writer and writer has repeated the amiable legend that Clement first saw the manuscript when he walked on stage for its performance.

Though greatly esteemed by his contemporaries as a musician and violinist, Clement was a peculiar combination of virtuoso and circus clown. After playing the first movement, Clement interrupted the premiere with a diversion. Before going on, he played one of his own works written for one string, with the violin turned upside down ("mit umgekehrter Violine"), reports of the evening have it.

Such were the amenities of the Viennese! Mozart's father had taken note of this attitude as early as 1767 when he wrote in a letter: "The Viennese are not eager for anything serious and sensible and care for nothing but utter trash, burlesques, ghost tricks, farces and devil's antics. . . ."

Perhaps because of these monkeyshines, Beethoven withdrew his earlier dedication of the concerto to Clement, which he had done by means of a polylingual pun "Concerto par Clemenza pour Clement." When the work was published in 1809, it carried a dedication to Stephen von Brüning, a boyhood friend.

Under such circumstances of performance it is easy to see why the concerto was not an initial success. The first-night reviewer made obliging, albeit condescending, comments on Beethoven's originality, the many beautiful passages of the concerto and the audience's enthusiasm; however, "the judgment of connoisseurs . . . confesses that the cohesion often appears quite disrupted and the unending repetitions of several ordinary passages can easily grow wearisome."

Only with great difficulty did the work make its way into its present place of pre-eminence in the violin concerto repertoire. In spite of later and more sedate and musicianly performances in Berlin, Paris, Vienna and Leipzig, widespread enthusiasm did not attend the work until 1884 when the celebrated Joachim played it as a thirteen-year-old child prodigy in London with Mendelssohn conducting. Another notable Joachim performance took place eleven years later in Dusseldorf, this time with Robert Schumann conducting the orchestra.

The concerto is a product of one of the most robust and affirmative periods in Beethoven's entire career, a period that saw completion of this third, fourth, fifth and sixth symphonies; and fourth and fifth piano concertos; the Rasoumovsky quartets; and the Appassionata and Waldstein piano sonatas.

Beethoven's peculiar absorption with themes based on repeated notes, of which the "Fate Motif" of the Fifth Symphony is perhaps the most well-known instance, is shared in this concerto. Here the vital repeated notes are heard by means of five taps on the kettledrum, which serve to introduce the first movement. (There is a story that this motif was suggested to Beethoven on hearing his neighbor knocking on the door for admission late at night.)

For this performance with the San Jose Symphony, Mr. Spivakovsky will play his own cadenzas. His cadenzas for all three movements of the Beethoven concerto have recently been published by Breitkopf and Hartel. This is a singular honor, for this distinguished firm has not published Beethoven cadenzas since those of Joachim.

## SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SANDOR SALGO, *Conductor*

THIRD CONCERT — SEASON 1967-68

Tuesday, February 20, 1968 at 8:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium



*Guest Artist*

CHARLES ROSEN, Pianist

DON QUIXOTE — SYMPHONIC POEM.....*Strauss*

Introduction  
Theme With Variations  
Finale

INTERMISSION

CONCERTO IN B FLAT MAJOR, NO. 2.....*Brahms*

Allegro non troppo  
Allegro appassionato  
Andante  
Allegretto grazioso

Mr. Rosen

## PROGRAM NOTES

By MARILYN TUCKER

### DON QUIXOTE—

Fantastic Variations on a Theme of Knightly Character .....Richard Strauss  
(1864-1949)

Until he became a great friend of the poet-philosopher Alexander Ritter, Strauss had been content to write a small body of orchestral music that was largely derivative of Brahms. Ritter soon changed all that. He was a passionate Wagnerite, and it was his influence that turned Strauss from the Brahmsian ideal of absolute music within classical structures to the dramatic and programmatic world of Wagner. Strauss confessed that Ritter's influence had been "in the nature of a storm wind. He urged me on to the development of the poetic, the expressive in music, as exemplified in the works of Liszt, Berlioz and Wagner."

Boldly, Strauss began writing "Aus Italien," a symphonic fantasy presumably registering impression of an Italian journey. It was a disaster. The aging Hans von Bülow shook his head and inquired: "Does my age make me so reactionary? I find that the clever composer has gone to the limits of tonal possibilities (in the realm of beauty) and, in fact, has even gone beyond these limits without real necessity."

This was 1886, but for Strauss there was no turning back; he even enjoyed being in the center of a controversy. Within ten years he had produced the eight "shocking" tone poems on which his orchestral fame still rests, even though contemporaries called him "the bad boy of music."

Directly after "Till Eulenspiegel" (1895) and "Thus Spake Zarathustra" (1896), Strauss produced "Don Quixote, a masterpiece that Philip Hale called "the virtuoso tone poem." Completed in Munich in 1897, it was given a first performance in Cologne in March 1898 with Franz Wüllner conducting. Ten days later, Strauss conducted it in London.

"Don Quixote" has been called a program piece without a program at least insofar as the score is concerned. No count could ever be made, however, of the members of spinners of fanciful prose whose explanations have come without end. On this subject, one Arthur Hahn wrote twenty-seven printed pages. One of his more startling deductions concluded that "certain curious harmonies" in the Introduction "characterize admirably the well-known tendency of Don Quixote toward false conclusions."

In his biography of Strauss, Max Steinitzer contends that the work is "quite acceptable as absolute music." The following brief outline of the work follows what has been printed in the

two-piano version. Don Quixote is portrayed in the orchestra by solo cello, Sancho Panza by bass clarinet, tenor tuba and later by solo viola.

*Introduction* — The elderly hero's readings in chivalric lore cause him to lose his mind over impossible follies. Don Quixote vows to become a knight errant.

*Variation I* — The Knight and His Squire Start on Their Journey — Inspired by the memory of his vision for the fair Dulcinea, the Don attacks a group of monstrous giants. They are windmills, whose sails unseat him without ceremony from his horse.

*Variation II* — The Victorious Battle Against the Host of the Great Emperor Alifanfaron — The befuddled Don attacks a huge advancing army. They are sheep (their bleating can be heard in muted brass). He is stoned and felled by angry shepherds.

*Variation III* — Colloquies of Knight and Squire — Don Quixote speaks to his Squire the real meaning of Honor, Glory and the Ideal Woman — the essence of chivalry. Sancho Panza favors the reality of a comfortable life.

*Variation IV* — The Adventures with the Penitents — The Don mistakes a band of pilgrims for robbers, attacks them and is soundly thrashed. (The religious chant is heard in bassoons and muted horns.)

*Variation V* — The Knight's Vigil — Don Quixote spurns sleep to muse over the Ideal Woman. Dulcinea appears in a vision (ardent solo cello with strings and harp cadenzas).

*Variation VI* — The Meeting with Dulcinea — Sancho Panza convinces the Don that a peasant wench is actually the Ideal Woman in disguise. Don Quixote vows vengeance on the evil magicians who have cast their spell on Dulcinea.

*Variation VII* — The Ride Through the Air — Astride a wooden horse, the Don and Sancho Panza take an imaginary ride through the air (listen for the coursing of the wind), but they never leave the ground and their fantasy comes to a sudden halt (on sustained bassoon note).

*Variation VIII* — The Journey in the Enchanted Park — The pair jump into a boat to rescue an important knight. The boat is without oars and capsizes. The Don and the squire are grateful for escape.

*Variation IX* — The Combat with Two Magicians — Back on their horses, the two adventurers charge two peaceable monks on mules. The Don thinks they are the mighty magicians and scores an utter rout over the monks.

*Variation X* — Knight of the White Moon — In his final adventure, Don Quixote loses a duel with a "true friend", who promises him that his madness can be cured if he retires for one year.

*Finale* — The Death of Don Quixote — No longer bemused, the Don wonders over his life, its useless aims and empty maneuvers. It was all the result of vanity, he concludes. He is now prepared for the peace of death. (Here the Don Quixote theme in the solo cello takes on the character of a lament.)



PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 IN B FLAT MAJOR, OP. 83.....*Johannes Brahms*  
(1833-1897)

When Brahms completed his second piano concerto, he wrote his friend Elisabeth von Hersogenberg: "I don't mind telling you that I have written a tiny, tiny piano-forte concerto with a tiny, tiny wisp of a scherzo. It is in B-flat, and I have a good reason to fear that I have worked this udder, which has yielded good milk before, too often and too vigorously."

To his friend Dr. Billroth he sent the manuscript with an accompanying note that the package contained "some little piano pieces."

Well, the "little" piano piece, the "tiny, tiny" concerto is one of, if not *the* most extensive and difficult works in the piano concerto literature. Some writers contend that it is actually a symphony with piano obligato. Others have said perhaps somewhat more accurately that No. 2 is like a symphony for piano and orchestra. Even Brahms was forced to admit no one occasion to an inquiring female piano student: "It is decidedly not for little girls."

Inspiration for writing the concerto was first felt in Italy where Brahms journeyed in April 1878 in the company of Dr. Billroth and the Hungarian composer Karl Goldmark. From the Alps to Sicily, he enjoyed it all—the sights and most of the sounds, although Italian opera moved him to remark pungently that it all seemed to be nothing more than a series of final cadences.

In May he returned to Portschach in the Austrian Alps where he began first sketches. There matters lay for three years. But a second journey to Italy in March 1881 renewed the spark and when he returned home in late May, he began serious work. By July 7 the concerto was completed.

The work had its first hearing in a rehearsal of the Meiningen Orchestra on October 17, 1881, Hans von Bülow conducting and the composer at the piano. The first public performance was on November 9 at the Budapest Redouten Saal with Alexander Erkel conducting the Orchestra of the National Theatre, Brahms again the soloist. The same program saw the composer conducting Cherubini's *Medea* Overture and his own Academic Festival Overture and First Symphony.

The concerto was not at first enthusiastically received and it was probably Brahms' own fault. He is said to have been a notoriously slovenly public performer, favoring interpretation rather than technique. He was also not above changing passages as he went along. Yet he would not entrust the first performances of his works to others. As time went on and more brilliant hands tried out the concerto in public, sentiment changed. The concerto is nevertheless still considered the test of greatness for most pianists.

**SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

SANDOR SALGO, *Conductor*

FOURTH CONCERT — SEASON 1967-68

Tuesday, April 23, 1968 at 8:30 p.m.  
Civic Auditorium



*Guest Artists*

THE ROMEROS

**PROGRAM**

CONCERTO FOR FOUR GUITARS.....*Vivaldi*  
The Romeros

CONCERTO FOR GUITAR.....*Castelnouvo-Tedesco*  
Angel Romero

**INTERMISSION**

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST—DRAMATIC CANTATA.....*William Walton*

The San Jose State College a capella choir

WILLIAM ERLENDSON, *Director*

EDWIN C. DUNNING, Bass-baritone, *Soloist*

## PROGRAM NOTES

By MARILYN TUCKER

### CONCERTO FOR FOUR GUITARS IN B MINOR.....Antonio Vivaldi

The transcription of Vivaldi's four-violin concerto for four guitars was a joint effort on the part of the Romero's, who premiered their version of the Vivaldi work with the San Antonio Symphony in October 1965. Since then, the family has played it with a number of other orchestras, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland, San Diego and Honolulu musical organizations.

The concerto comes from Vivaldi's Opus 3 "L'estro armonico" ("Harmonic Inspiration") collection. It is the tenth of twelve concertos in the series, which was published about 1712. Its three movements are in the old form of *sonata da camera*. Vivaldi's original orchestration called for first and second violas, violincello and continuo.

Vivaldi is an historic figure in the development of the concerto. He wrote 450 of them, in addition to a breathtaking output of forty operas, more than one hundred major choral works, twenty-five secular cantata, seventy-three sonatas and scores of other works. His music is currently in widespread revival.

Vivaldi exerted an important influence on other composers, among them his contemporary Bach who is known to have hand-copied parts from Vivaldi concertos. As a matter of fact, this very concerto had an earlier transcription by the Leipzig cantor, who reset its solo parts for four harpsichords and changed the key to A minor. Bach also transcribed five other Vivaldi concertos for different solo and groups of instruments, a measure of his high esteem for the Italian composer.

### CONCERTO FOR GUITAR IN D.....Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

The resurgence of the guitar as a solo instrument for the concert hall in this century has been accompanied by a select body of new works written for the national instrument of Spain.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, born in Florence of a Spanish-Jewish family which had resided in Italy since the times of the Inquisition, has been subject to many influences. These have included the romanticism of Brahms in early works, folk music, jazz and Spanish subjects of which this concerto is a notable example.

Now a resident of Beverly Hills, the composer writes of this work:

"Probably I would have never written for the guitar if had not been for Andres Segovia, that wonderful artist and faithful friend. And it was at his request that, in 1939, I composed the Concerto in D for Guitar and Orchestra, which he performed for the first time in Montevideo, in October 1939. It was the last work which I composed in Italy, before I emigrated to the United States; and strangely enough, although it was written in the most tragic period of my life, it is one of my most serene compositions. It is in the customary three movements. The first one, *Allegro giusto*, in sonata form, is rather "neo-classic" in inspiration and related (as in my previous sonata) to Boccherini's style. The second, *Andantino alla romanza*, more romantic in character, is a tender farewell to the Tuscan countryside which I was about to leave. The third, *Vivo e cavalleresco*, more Spanish in character, is rhythmic and bold, in the mood of the old ballad. All three movements have extended cadenzas for the solo instrument. . . ."

### BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST—DRAMATIC CANTATA.....William Walton (1902- )

William Walton's international reputation was established with a number of notable film scores of the 40's: *Major Barbara*, *Spitfire*, *Henry V* and *Hamlet*. On the English home front, however, his *Belshazzar's Feast* had long been a great favorite. Written in 1931 when Walton was only 29, the work was premiered at the Leeds Festival under the late Malcolm Sargent. With this one work, Walton inherited the choral tradition that England so favors in its music. The most recent composer of the English choral school had been Sir Edward Elgar, who, like his successor Walton, was self taught in composition.

The text for *Belshazzar's Feast* came from Sir Osbert Sitwell, who with brother Sachervell and sister Edith exerted an important influence of the composer's development. Edith had already provided the text for Walton's earlier *Facade*, his only previous exercise in choral writing. The Sitwell text for *Belshazzar's Feast* is a dramatic abridgement of the Fall of Babylon as described in the Old Testament book of Daniel, Chapter 5, with added lines from Psalms 81 and 137.

The orchestra prescribed by Walton is larger than most—full symphonic forces including an organ, plus piano, alto saxophone, E flat clarinet and a dazzling array of percussion calling for bass drum, side drum, triangle, cymbals, glockenspiel, tambourine, gong, anvil, slapstick and Chinese block. Significant contributions to the splendor of sound are also made by two extra brass bands (in the manner of Berlioz), each with its own three trumpets, three trombones and tuba.

The vocal parts make use of a large chorus, frequently subdivided, and a solo baritone who introduces the action and functions in the role of commentator. The choral writing is massive, "perhaps the only compositional technique that English composers are heir to," as Peter Heyworth has observed. Walton is no innovator, but what he has managed to do is to adapt the English oratorio tradition into a stylistic framework that is 20th century.

With these huge musical forces at work, "Belshazzar's Feast" has enticed contemporary critics into descriptive verbiage of "barbaric splendor," "explosive intoxication of sound," "volatile sweep" and "35 minutes of vivid choral frescoes."

The action is in three main parts. First there is Isaiah's prophecy of the destruction of Babylon and its subsequent captivity and the lyrical lament of the psalmist "By the waters of Babylon." From this section we move to descriptions of Babylon's magnificence, riches, extravagant feasts and orgies, ending with a mighty "Hail" to Belshazzar. The dramatic climax is reached in the third part: scenes of the eerie handwriting on the wall ("Mene mene, tekal upharsin"), Belshazzar's death, an exultant hymn of praise and a final paean of Alleluias.

"Belshazzar's Feast" is called a dramatic cantata, but the drama is not one of individuals. Rather it comes from the collective eye of the crowd from which flow attitudes of sorrow, gaiety and exultation. While commenting on and participating in the action, the chorus has no fixed identity, portraying Jews and Babylonians alike.